

ORMSKIRK  
TO 2485  
JAMES  
ORMSKIRK

Urban District Council  
of Ormskirk.

*Annual - Report*

OF THE

*Medical Officer of Health,*

**For the Year 1920.**

Geo. E. Scholefield, M.B.E., M.D., D.P.H.

*(Hon. Assoc. Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England),*

**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.**

ORMSKIRK :

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URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL  
OF ORMSKIRK.

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# ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1920.

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*To the Chairman and Members of the*

*Ormskirk Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present for your consideration my Annual Report for the year 1920, dealing with the Public Health, the Vital Statistics, and the Sanitary Administration of the District during 1920.

## **Population.**

The Registrar-General estimates this at the middle of the year to have been 6,895 for both birth-rate and death-rate, which is 13 less for the birth-rate and 264 more for the death-rate than the figures for 1919.

## **Birth Rate.**

One hundred and fifty-two births belonging to Ormskirk were registered during the year, 78 boys and 74 girls. This gives an *Annual Birth-rate* of 22·0 per 1000 of the population, which is 1·8 above that for 1919, and ·2 above the average of the previous 10 years. Twelve of the births were illegitimate, which is 7·9 per cent. of the total births. The birth-rate for England and Wales was 25·4.

## **Death Rate.**

One hundred and sixty-seven deaths were registered. Deducting those of persons who belong to other districts and adding those of residents who died outside, the net total is 100, 55 males and 45 females. This gives an *Annual Death-rate* of 14·5 per 1000 of the population, which is 3·5 below that for 1919 and 1·4 below the average of the 10 preceding years. The rate for England and Wales 12·4.

### Epidemic Death Rate.

Eight deaths were due to the epidemic diseases, two to Whooping Cough, three to Diphtheria, and three to Infantile Diarrhoea, which gives an *Epidemic Death-rate* of 1.16 per 1000, that for 1919 being .75, and the average of the 10 preceding years .92.

### Infantile Mortality Rate.

Sixteen deaths of children under the age of one year were registered, which gives an annual Infantile mortality-rate of 105 per 1000 births, which is 20 more than that for 1919, and five more than the average of the preceding 10 years.

Nine deaths were due to Pulmonary Tuberculosis, giving a death-rate of 1.30 per 1000, being .05 less than that for the previous year, and .09 less than the 10 years' average.

Nineteen deaths were due to Respiratory Disease other than Pulmonary Tuberculosis, giving a rate of 2.7 per 1000, that for the previous year being 3.6. Heart Disease caused 11 deaths, with a rate of 1.6, and Cancer was responsible for 10 deaths with a rate of 1.4. One death only was registered as due to Influenza, against 16 in 1919.

### Infectious Diseases.

The total number of cases of Infectious Disease (notifiable and non-notifiable), that came to my knowledge during the year was 128, as follows:—Diphtheria 73, Scarlet Fever 19, Enteric Fever 2, Erysipelas 6, Malaria 1, Pneumonia 3, Ophthalmia Neonatorum 1, Measles 8, Tuberculosis 15, (Pulmonary 13, other situations 2). There were 14 more cases of Scarlet Fever than in the previous year; the disease, however, did not take on the character of an epidemic, the cases occurring sporadically throughout the year, and with the exception of 3 in the same house had no connection one with another. Diphtheria was again very prevalent, there being 73 cases, five more than in the previous year. April, August, November and December were the months in which there

were the majority of the cases, which were distributed over the whole district, no part appearing to suffer to any extent more than another, and the influence of school attendance did not seem to be a factor in the epidemic. In few of the cases did there seem to be a common focus. In one house there were four cases, and in each of three others there were two. Forty-eight of the premises from which the cases were notified were found to have sanitary defects of some kind or other. The schools were frequently visited with the object of discovering carriers, swabs were taken from the throats and noses of suspicious cases, and they were also taken from other inmates of houses where there was any suspicion of there being a carrier case. Sixteen swabs were taken from throat, five being reported upon as positive, and eleven as negative; 36 were taken from noses, 20 being positive and 16 negative. The children from whom the swabs were positive were excluded from school until a negative result was reported. There were three deaths, one in hospital, one before it could be removed, and one before being seen by a medical man. One of the cases of Enteric Fever was imported, and the other lived on premises with sanitary defects. There was a marked decline in the cases of Pneumonia, only three being notified.

### **Tuberculosis.**

Fifteen cases of Tuberculosis were notified, in 13 cases the disease was in the lungs, and in other parts of the body in two. All were notified by medical practitioners, who seldom fail to notify.

### **Bacterial Aids to Diagnosis.**

One specimen of fæces from a case of Dysentery notified in 1919, was sent for examination, and 80 swabs from the Isolation Hospital, making with those mentioned under Diphtheria 116 swabs from throats and noses.

### **Isolation of Infectious Cases.**

The Ormskirk Urban District Council and the Lathom and



Burscough District Council have a Joint Hospital for the isolation and treatment of infectious cases, in which there are 26 beds.

There is now no local means of isolating cases of Smallpox, but the Board have an arrangement with the Liverpool Hospital Committee, by which cases of Smallpox can be sent to the Corporation's Smallpox Hospital if there is accommodation. No retaining fee is paid.

Thirteen cases of Scarlet Fever out of 19 notified, and 69 cases of Diphtheria out of 73 notified, were admitted to the hospital from Ormskirk. There was one death due to Diphtheria. Three hundred and twenty-four thousand units of antitoxin were used.

### **Disinfection.**

There is a Washington-Lyon Steam Disinfector at the Isolation Hospital, and this was used for Ormskirk 28 times during the year, and 1157 articles of clothing, &c., were disinfected. For other disinfection a formaline spray is used, and by this means 122 rooms in 86 houses were disinfected. In addition, the schools in the town were sprayed eight times.

### **Physical Features, etc.**

Ormskirk lies on the border of the low-lying lands which run for 6 to 8 miles to the sea and the estuary of the River Ribble. The altitude varies from 100 feet above sea level to about 250. The occupations of the working classes are largely on the farms in the surrounding district, there are also small print works, rope works, agricultural machine works, and during the war a large brass foundry was commenced, which has become permanent. Many of the residents have occupations in Liverpool, and the other large towns within reasonable distance.

### **Schools.**

There are four Elementary Schools in Ormskirk, the Boys' School, Aughton-street, the Girls' School, Derby-street, the In-



fants' School in the same building, and the R.C. School, Hants-lane. The water supply to each is from the public main. The sanitary accommodation is satisfactory. In the Aughton-street School and the Hants-lane School, the light, ventilation, and air space are satisfactory, but there has been no improvement in the Derby-street Schools. The action taken to prevent the spread of infectious disease is mentioned on page 4.

### Infant Welfare Centre.

The Infant Welfare Centre which was opened in September, 1919, has had a very successful year, the attendance has grown, and the average number of babies brought to the Welfare Centre each week was 22·6 for the first six months, and 37·2 for the second six months of the year.

It is open on Tuesday afternoons, and is in charge of your Medical Officer of Health and the County Health Visitor, Miss Dickinson. There is a Voluntary Ladies' Committee, three of whom attend each week, and give valuable assistance. The necessary expenses are borne by the Child Welfare Department of the County Council, and extras are provided by the Ladies Committee. Advice is given to mothers, and milk, etc., is given or provided at less than cost price in necessitous cases. The mothers can also have advice regarding their own health, and an increasing number of them have availed themselves of this during the year, there having been seven expectant mothers with 10 attendances, and 34 mothers with 52 attendances.

The Council has adopted the Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890, the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, and the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907.

### Food.

The supply of milk during the year was sufficient to meet the needs of the inhabitants, but had it not been for the fact that many mothers feed their children on dried milk instead of fresh

cow's milk, there would have been a shortage. On the whole the quality was good, samples being taken by the County Police, who administer the Foods and Drugs Act. One sample resulted in a prosecution, a farmer being fined £1 and costs for adulteration. Sixteen other samples under the Act were found satisfactory. I am indebted to Superintendent Crapper, of Ormskirk, for the foregoing information.

### **Water Supply.**

This is ample for the needs of the inhabitants, and is of good quality. It is pumped from a deep well to a water tower on one of the higher elevations of the district from which it is distributed, there is no risk of contamination, the supply is constant. All houses are supplied from the public mains.

### **Drainage and Sewerage.**

The district is sewered throughout, and the sewers are ample for all needs. The sewage is conveyed to a farm about a mile beyond the boundary of the district, where it is treated by settling tanks, filter beds, and land filtration. The Inspector of the Ribble Commissioners periodically takes samples of the effluent.

### **Sanitary Administration.**

There is one Inspector of Nuisances, who is also the Surveyor and Rate Collector. He has an assistant in the office, who does clerical work.

### **Slaughter Houses.**

There has been no change in the number during the year; they have been regularly visited, and on such visits have been found in a satisfactory condition. No diseased meat was found, one carcase, however, was examined, and found to be in such a bruised condition that it was unfit for human food. Visits were regularly paid at the time of slaughtering. In 1914 there were two registered slaughter houses, and the same number both in January and December, 1920.

### Dairies, Cowsheds and Milksheds.

No new ones have been registered. All have been regularly inspected, and notices served for lime-washing and cleaning, which were carried out. A notice was also served in one case for the provision of better ventilation and light, to have the floor grouted, and to make provision for the discharge of the urine into a gulley outside the cowshed.

### Bakehouses.

The number is the same as in the previous year. They have been regularly inspected and found satisfactory. Where required notices to lime-wash have been served.

### Common Lodging Houses.

There are four in the district, the same number as in 1919. They have been regularly visited, and notices to lime-wash were served when required. There were no cases of overcrowding.

### Closet Accommodation.

During the year 47 privies and two pail closets have been converted to water closets, and the Council has decided to continue the work until the whole of the privies in the town are done away with.

The Closet Accommodation is as follows :—

Water Closet	..	..	..	..	..	.. 1035
Waste Water Closets	..	..	..	..	..	.. 7
Privy Closets	..	..	..	..	..	.. 401
Privy Middens	..	..	..	..	..	.. 328
Pail Closets	..	..	..	..	..	.. 45
Ashbins	..	..	..	..	..	.. 621
Ashpits	..	..	..	..	..	.. 165

### Scavenging.

This work is carried out by the Council. The ashpits and dustbins are systematically emptied, and the refuse carted to the



destructor. Here it is sorted, and what is of manurial value is sold to farmers in the district, who give an undertaking to remove the mixed manure and keep the depot clear when called upon to do so. The remainder is burnt in the destructor.

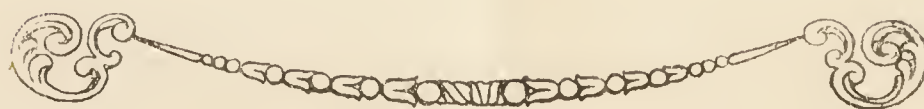
### Tarspraying of Roads.

During the year the main roads laid down with macadam have been tarsprayed; the work is carried out under the direction of the County Council, and the principal roads laid down with macadam have been tarsprayed by the District Council, the work being done by the Council's own employees.

### Nuisances.

In addition to the complaints made to the Medical Officer of Health and Inspector, periodical visits have been paid throughout the district, and the table following summarises the outcome of these and other action :—

Defective Drains	..	..	..	..	..	60
Deposits of refuse and manure	..	..	..	..	..	50
Repairs needed to damp houses	..	..	..	..	..	25
Want of cleanliness	..	..	..	..	..	5
Notices served—Preliminary	..	..	..	..	..	59
Statutory	..	..	..	..	..	9—68
Nuisances abated	..	..	..	..	..	95





## Annual Report on Factories and Workshops.

Number of Inspections .. .. .	174
Defects found—	
Want of Cleanliness .. .. .	10
Remedied .. .. .	10

The workshops were visited periodically, and were found on the whole to be in a satisfactory condition. The defects mentioned in the foregoing table were all want of lime-washing, and when attention was called to the matter, it was done without any further measures being necessary.

The number of workshops and occupations are as follows — Bakehouses, 7 ; Basket Makers, 3 ; Cycle Dealers, 10 ; Confectioners, 6 ; Stone Masons, 2 ; Milliners and Dressmakers, 16 ; Plumbers and Painters, 9 ; Shoemakers, 10 ; Tailors, 5 ; Wheelwrights and Joiners, 9 ; Blacksmiths, 4 ; Cooper, 1 ; Clogger, 1 ; Cabinet Makers, 4 ; total, 87.

### Housing.

The number of houses in the District is 1514, and of these the working-class houses number 1072. Two new houses for the working-classes have been erected during the year.

The population at the Census of 1911 was 7,407, and it is now estimated to be 6,895. No important changes have taken place during the year, nor is any anticipated in the near future.

There is a shortage of houses to the extent of 120.

The Council has a scheme in hand to provide 110 new houses, and plans have been submitted for 10 houses to be built by private enterprise.

There are 22 houses where overcrowding exists, and as there are no vacant houses in the town, it is not possible to deal with the matter until there are new houses ready for occupation.

The general standard of the housing in the District is fairly good, there being a large proportion of satisfactory working-class houses. There are also, Ormskirk being a very old town, a fair number that are not so satisfactory. Some of these will be done away with when there is other accommodation available, and others can be made satisfactory, when improvements are effected. Some have been repaired during the year, and others are in process of being dealt with. One serious difficulty is the want of labour and heavy cost incurred in repairing property.

The chief defects found are faulty roofs, loose windows, joints between bricks faulty, and in some cases porous bricks.

In one case legal proceedings were instituted against an owner who objected to repair four houses, but before the case came before the Court the work was commenced.

The Architects employed by the Council are getting out specifications for the erection to commence with, of 32 houses in the Housing Scheme. Part of them will be built of brick and part of cement blocks.

One new house, besides the two mentioned previously, has been built during the year.

The figures of the work done will be found in the accompanying Table.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

**GEO. E. SCHOLEFIELD, M.B.E., M.D., D.P.H..**

*Hon. Assoc. Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England.*

# CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE ORMSKIRK URBAN DISTRICT, 1920.

CAUSES OF DEATH.					Males.	Females.
All Causes (civilians only)	..	..	..	..	55	45
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	—	2
Diphtheria and Croup	..	..	..	..	2	1
Influenza	..	..	..	..	—	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	..	..	..	..	3	6
Cancer, Malignant Disease	..	..	..	..	7	3
Meningitis	..	..	..	..	1	—
Organic Heart Disease	..	..	..	..	8	3
Bronchitis	..	..	..	..	6	10
Pneumonia (all forms)	..	..	..	..	2	—
Other Respiratory Diseases	..	..	..	..	—	1
Diarrhoea, &c. (under two years)	..	..	..	..	3	—
Cirrhosis of Liver	..	..	..	..	1	—
Alcoholism	..	..	..	..	1	—
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	..	..	..	..	—	2
Congenital Debility, &c.	..	..	..	..	1	4
Violence, apart from Suicide	..	..	..	..	1	—
Suicide	..	..	..	..	1	—
Other Defined Diseases	..	..	..	..	16	12
Causes Ill-defined or unknown	..	..	..	..	2	—

## Deaths of Infants under one year of age—

Legitimate	..	..	..	..	..	8	8
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	1	—
Total Births	..	..	..	..	..	78	74
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	..	72	68
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	6	6

Population (for births and deaths)—6895

## APPENDICES.

### HOUSING CONDITIONS.

#### STATISTICS.

Year ended 31st December, 1920.

#### 1.—GENERAL.

(1) Estimated population	..	..	..	..	6,895
(2) General death-rate	..	..	..	..	14·5
(3) Death-rate from Tuberculosis	..	..	..	..	1·3
(4) Infantile Mortality	..	..	..	..	105
(5) Number of dwelling-houses of all classes	..	..	..	..	1514
(6) Number of working-class dwelling-houses	..	..	..	..	1 072
(7) Number of new working-class houses erected	..	..	..	..	2

#### 2.—UNFIT DWELLING-HOUSES.

##### I.—INSPECTION.

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	..	103
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910	.. .. .	103
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	.. .. .	—
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	..	20



## II.—REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or other officers .. .. .	89
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## III.—ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS.

*Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied .. .. .	12
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defect were remedied—	
(a) by owner .. .. .	20
(b) by Local Authority in default of owner .. .. .	—

## IV.—STAFF ENGAGED ON HOUSING WORK.

The Medical Officer of Health.

The Inspector of Nuisances, who is also the Surveyor.

Three architects.







